

Gun Safety: Reducing Suicide Risk



Own it? Secure it.

Worried? Remove it.

Safety Tips to Reduce Gun Suicides

- **Unload** your guns when not in use.
- **Store** guns and bullets separately in secure locations.
- **Lock** your guns and bullets. Free gun locks may be available – check projectchildsafe.org for availability.
- **Remove** guns from your home if someone who lives there is showing signs of suicide. Contact your local police station to see if they will temporarily hold your guns.

Suicide is Preventable

- Guns are the most lethal method of suicide. A person that acts impulsively and has access to a gun is a deadly mix.
- Suicide is often an impulsive act. Most people who attempt suicide do not want to die – they just do not know how to keep on living.
- Many people believe that a person will take their life once their mind is made up, **but this is not true.** 90% of survivors of suicide attempts do not go on to die by suicide. They continue to live their lives.
- Every year in Massachusetts, over 100 people end their lives with a gun. By following these gun safety tips you can help prevent suicides.

Did You Know?

It's against Massachusetts law to keep a gun without securing it in a locked container or using some type of gun lock.

Possible Signs of Suicide

If you have a gun, make sure no one has access to it who:

- Says things like "Things will never get better" or "No one would miss me if I were gone."
- Experiences physical changes (sudden weight gain or loss, appearing tired, not caring about appearance or cleanliness).
- Acts differently (change in mood, sleep habits, or eating habits).
- Is going through tough situations (recent loss or problems in relationship, work, or school).

If your loved one shows any of these signs of suicide, take it seriously and get them help. Connect with a mental health professional – call the **Samaritans Statewide Hotline: 877-870-HOPE (4673)**, and visit the websites below for more information.



Resources

mass.gov/dph/suicideprevention
afsp.org/preventing-suicide
meansmatter.org
projectchildsafe.org
lokitup.org